



Mayor and Council Meeting Work Session Minutes September 26, 2011 PM

The Riverdale Mayor and City Council met on September 26, 2011 at 6:00PM for the purpose of conducting a regular work session. The meeting was held in the conference room on the second floor at City Hall, located at 7200 Church Street, Riverdale, Georgia 30274.

Call to Order and Welcome

With a quorum present, Mayor Evelyn Wynn-Dixon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call

All members of the governing body were present for the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

The following amendments were made to the agenda:

Addition(s): None.

Deletion(s): None

Postponement(s): None

Tabled Item(s): None.

The Agenda was approved by general consensus.

City Manager's Report

Iris Jessie, City Manager, polled the Mayor and Council to determine which topics they wanted to discuss first.

There was consensus to discuss the work session agenda in the following order:

- City Hall Annex Use/Rental Guidelines
- Update on Wilson Road Park
- Naming of Facilities/Parking Spaces at Town Center Site
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Service Delivery Strategy

Ms. Jessie informed the Mayor and Council that by default Chief Patterson monitors and manages the meeting room at City Hall Annex. She explained that there had been numerous requests for the use of the facility by various groups. She said that as a result it is suitable to develop and implement a policy. Ms. Jessie turned the floor over to Chief Samuel Patterson, Public Safety Director, to further discuss the matter.

Chief Patterson reminded the Mayor and City Council Members that the proposed guidelines had been provided in advance to provide them the opportunity to review and provide feedback. He indicated that the policy was based on feedback he received from professionals who have experience in the field. He pointed out that the policy is in draft form and he is open to accept suggestions.

Mayor Dixon opened the floor for comments and/or concerns from the members of the governing body.

Mayor Dixon said that if the initial idea was to allow Riverdale citizens to use the room free of charge then the policy should not stray too far from the initial intent. She further said that the room should not be used for religious nor political purposes.

Chief Patterson responded that the room can be free of charge for Riverdale citizens during normal business hours. He further stated that an officer would have to be present for after hour events.

Council Member Hall stated that he had not reviewed the policy.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said that although there is a need to adopt guidelines, it is important to remember the discussions that took place prior to the construction of the new city hall and multi-purpose center. She said it had been agreed that the old council chambers would be free to Riverdale citizens with the exception of implementing a clean-up fee. She opined that it would be a good idea to replace the carpet with flooring that is more user-friendly and durable.

Chief Patterson reiterated that the building would definitely be free during business hours; however, he explained that the reason a fee was implemented was because an officer would need to be present for events that are held after hours. He said if the pleasure of the Mayor and Council is to allow the facility to be used at no charge, then they should understand that the city will incur all associated fees. He said on-duty officers cannot be responsible for securing the building after public use.

Mayor Dixon inquired about the amount of the fees.

Chief Patterson said the fees vary based on the nature of the event. He said exact figures were noted in the proposed guidelines.

Council Member Stamps-Jones suggested that a deposit should be required so that the renter will be held accountable for ensuring that the building is clean and secure. She asked if the radio keys could be programmed to provide limited access to only the side door. She said it would be a good idea to require renters to provide a photocopy their driver's license as well. She said there was too much discussion taking place regarding an issue that can be easily resolved.

Chief Patterson said that the radio keys can be programmed accordingly.

Lolita Grant, Finance Director, asked the Mayor and Council to consider the location of the Finance Department. She added that she wanted to ensure that the integrity and security of the department were not jeopardized.

Mayor Dixon asked the members of the governing body to take a position on whether the facility will be free or not.

Council Member Ruffin asked Council Member Stamps-Jones to clarify whether or not it was her intention to rent the facility for free.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said that the initial consensus was to offer the facility free of charge to Riverdale residents.

There was consensus to discuss the matter at a later time.

Ms. Jessie directed the board's attention to the next item for discussion. She said members of council had inquired about the status of the naming of the facilities and parking spaces at city hall. She further stated that there had been several suggestions on how the names should be affixed. By way of example, she pointed out that the offices at city hall are identified by the use of name plates. She said a suggestion was made to affix an honorary plaque to the rooms, parking spaces and/or building instead of name plates.

Mayor Dixon polled the members of Council to determine how they wanted to move forward with the matter. She reminded Council Member Hall that during the retreats he never identified a room in his namesake. She asked him if he wanted anything at all named after him.

Council Member Hall said no.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said it is important to her for people to know who holds public office when they visit the building. She said there should be identifiable markers on the parking spaces at city hall. She further opined that plaques should be used to identify the rooms that have been named after elected officials.

Council Member Ruffin said it is not important for his name to be affixed to any room or parking space when there are other pertinent matters that need the Mayor and Council's attention.

Council Member Wallace reminded the board of the struggle that previous and sitting Council Members had gone through because of their support of the project. She said there was a lot of hard work, sweat and tears put into the project; therefore, the people who worked to bring the project to fruition should receive some type of recognition. She said she has no problem with affixing the honorary plaques outside of the rooms. She further said that the matter was discussed several times during the Mayor and Council retreats. She added that Staff had even asked the members of the governing body to identify rooms that they want named in their honor. She said if the work was not going to be carried out then it should never have been introduced.

Mayor Dixon said there are potential safety issues associated with placing identifiers on the parking spaces at city hall. She said Judge Ronald Freeman had previously voiced his concern regarding the matter and was in opposition of placing names/and or titles on the parking spaces. She said she does not want her name on her parking space.

Council Member Wallace reminded Mayor Dixon that prior to her taking office, the previous mayor did not support the project. She said Mayor Dixon stepped right in and lead the charge by supporting the project and enabling it to progress. She said the city manager, city clerk and elected officials had all undergone some form of attack about the Town Center project and it is important that their work is never forgotten.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said it is not a matter of glorifying oneself. She said the general public and those visiting the site should know who is in office. She said there are no pictures, names, or anything to identify who holds office.

Ms. Stephanie Thomas, City Clerk, indicated that the pictures from City Hall Annex would soon be transferred to the new location.

Directive issued by the members of Council:

Give the city manager the matter, let her work on it and bring back recommendations to Council.

Ms. Jessie explained that the Hazard Mitigation Plan addresses all hazards and how emergencies will be addressed. She said various departments are required to familiarize themselves with the plan so they will be prepared in the event of an emergency. She further stated that Clayton County is the official Emergency Management Agency (EMA). Ms. Jessie reminded the Mayor and Council that Staff had circulated the information via email for their review and feedback. She said that Council Member Wallace was provided a hard copy in lieu of an electronic version. She said the other members could have the same upon request. She asked the Mayor and Council Members to review the

document and share their concerns with Staff. She added that the matter would come before them for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns.

Council Member Hall indicated that he is certain that the Clayton County Hazard Mitigation Plan was patterned after the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS).

Council Members Stamps-Jones, Wallace and Ruffin did not have any questions and/or concerns.

Karl Kelley, City Engineer, reminded the board of the recent circulation of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Construction Services for Phase 1 of the new park. He said he had been in negotiations with the engineer to see if there are any cost savings that the City could take advantage of.

Mr. Kelley informed the Mayor and Council that the low bid came in at \$2,750,000 and the based bid at \$2,491,000. Mr. Kelley said he recently met with the city manager, finance director and Lose & Associates to discuss cost savings as well. He stated that Lose & Associates had a cost savings list that was very close to that of the City's. He said that the City could consider using modular walls of a different style and color as opposed to their initial selection. He said the use of sprigs on the fields instead of sod in certain areas (play area and football field) of the park would be feasible. He further said overall, the Staff wants a 7% contingency which is approximately \$187,25377. Mr. Kelley said that after meeting with the contractor, they assured him that the City could save approximately \$230k. He added that the deputy city attorney would provide the scope of work changes to Clayton County for review and approval by their staff. He said after the changes have been approved, it will come before the Mayor and Council for consideration. He recommended that the City take its time as they maneuver through the process so that maximum savings can be realized.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns.

Council Member Ruffin inquired about the durability of sprigs in comparison to sod.

Mr. Kelley said that sprigs are just as durable, if not better, than sod. He added that sod tends to roll which may not be good for the field and play areas.

In response to an inquiry made by Council Member Wallace regarding the irrigation system, Mr. Kelley indicated that the irrigation system will be designed by the architect.

Council Member Stamps-Jones asked Mr. Kelley to explain what Phase 1 of the park will encompass.

Mr. Kelley indicated that the softball/baseball field, the pavilion, the playground, concession stand and covered eating area will be included in Phase 1. He said the Mayor and Council would also modify the plans in an effort to save more money.

Mayor Dixon informed Council that they were running out of time for discussion. She asked if they wanted to take a recess and resume the work session after the business session adjourns.

Council Members Stamps-Jones, Wallace and Ruffin agreed to resume the work session after the business session adjourns.

Council Member Hall said it is his belief that after the adjournment of meetings and all business has been conducted, there is generally no need to recommence for further discussion.

There was consensus to take a recess and resume the work session after the business session adjourns.

Overview of Business Session Agenda:

Mayor Dixon asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the items that appeared on the business session agenda. There were none.

Discussion of Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

Mayor Dixon asked if anyone had any items for the next agenda. There were none offered.

(Work Session reconvened at 7:23PM)

Ms. Jessie reminded the Council Members that they had empowered Mayor Dixon to sign a resolution to extend the Service Delivery Strategy (s) negotiations. She said that she had put great effort into keeping the members of Council abreast of all developments related to the SDS.

Ms. Jessie stated that Clayton County's position is that negotiations should be able to move forward between the municipalities and the county. She explained that cities/counties should not be duplicating services. She said the City of Riverdale has a fire and police department; therefore, should not be double taxed for such services. She further explained that it is pertinent for the County to provide the City with an accurate account of what services their taxes are being used for on a county level.

Ms. Jessie stated that the County does not want to negotiate taxes. She said the municipalities want to negotiate the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST); however, the County does not believe the two topics are related.

Ms. Jessie further stated that the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) provided cities with talking points. She said that although the LOST does not expire until 2012, GMA advised that it is perfectly appropriate to include it in the SDS negotiations. Ms. Jessie stated that the municipalities have already settled into the services they provide. She further stated that if Clayton County will honor what they have already agreed to then there will not be an issue.

Ms. Jessie strongly communicated that the City has a lot to lose in this process. She said there is an arbitration clause if an agreement is not reached. She said the risks losing the LOST revenue and it would be difficult to operate. She advised the Mayor and Council to take time to peruse the information that Council Member Ruffin circulated.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said that even if the economy recovers the revenue from the LOST is still a significant amount to lose. She said she would schedule time to speak with the city manager to discuss the matter further.

Council Member Hall said his only interest is to protect the interest of Riverdale's share of the LOST revenue.

Council Member Wallace asked when arbitration would take place.

Ms. Jessie responded that arbitration would be scheduled immediately. She asked the Mayor and Council to refer back to one of the previous Mayor and Council Brief's wherein she provided information regarding the outcome of the City of Lilburn's case. She stated that the City of Lilburn came away with \$300k among other provisions.

Ms. Jessie further stated that the City needs to address important issues like animal control. She said the County charged the City for the use of their gun range and to install traffic monitoring/red light cameras.

Council Member Ruffin opined that the Council Member Hall's approach may not be the most fruitful in that Riverdale must not only be concerned about its citizens, but also about the welfare of the surrounding cities. He encouraged the Mayor and Council Members to meet with the Commissioners so they will have an idea of the City's position. He said it is also important to know what approach the County will take on the SDS. He stated that Wade Starr, Clayton County Manager, does not want to give up more than 25% of the LOST revenue. He further stated that unless the County lowers the millage rate some municipalities will be adversely impacted.

Council Member Ruffin said that the City's portion of Lost revenues over the years has been reduced from \$3.5 million to \$2.6 million. He said the City cannot afford to take a

hands-off approach. He said the cities of Forest Park, Jonesboro, College Park are vital to the negotiation process.

Mayor Dixon said she would call a meeting between all of the Clayton County mayors to discuss the matter. She said the negotiations should definitely address the issue of double-dipping. She said she would continue to keep the members of Council abreast of all developments. She further stated that the City stands to lose its municipal status if the negotiations fail. She indicated that if the City loses its municipal status it will not be eligible for CDBG, EPA and other vital support and funding.

Ms. Jessie added that the City would not be able to use police radars.

Council Member Wallace asked Mayor Dixon if she had discussed the matter with the Commissioners yet.

Mayor Dixon said yes.

In response to a question posed by Council Member Wallace regarding Mr. Starr's intentions and purpose of his visit.

Ms. Jessie said Mr. Starr only wanted to introduce himself as County Manager.

Mayor Dixon said the citizens stand to lose the most.

Council Member Ruffin directed the Mayor and Council's attention to No. 3 of Section 36-70-28 of the SDS Bill. He asked if anyone could interpret what the section means. He said he is aware that the section does not define the LOST; however, it is important to know if any other revenue sources will be impacted. Please see below:

§36-70-28. "Affected municipality" defined; review and revision of strategy

(a) As used in this Code section, the term "affected municipality" means each municipality required to adopt a resolution approving the local government service delivery strategy pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 36-70-25.

(b) Each county and affected municipality shall review, and revise if necessary, the approved strategy:

- (1) In conjunction with updates of the comprehensive plan as required by Article 1 of this chapter;
- (2) Whenever necessary to change service delivery or revenue distribution arrangements;
- (3) Whenever necessary due to changes in revenue distribution arrangements;
- (4) In the event of the creation, abolition, or consolidation of local governments;
- (5) When the existing service delivery strategy agreement expires; or
- (6) Whenever the county and affected municipalities agree to revise the strategy.

(c) In the event that a county or an affected municipality located within the county refuses to review and revise, if necessary, a strategy in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b) of this Code section, then any of the parties may use the alternative dispute resolution and appeal procedures set forth in subsection (d) of Code Section 36-70-25.1.

Ms. Jessie stated that the LOST and Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) could be impacted. She said it is something to be discussed and is usually discussed after the bicentennial census.

Council Member Ruffin stated that some of the mayors have personal vendettas against the County. He said it would be best for all the elected officials to gain an understanding of the SDS and how it impacts cities. He said Council Members Sparkle Adams is the only one who seems to have an idea of what is happening. He stated that he would soon call a meeting so that the cities can discuss the matter.

Ms. Jessie added that the meeting should be soon in the deadline is quickly approaching.

Council Member Wallace asked if this information has gone out to the citizens. She said the elected officials represent the citizens and should take a proactive approach to keeping the citizens informed. She said the more voices there are in the fight the more powerful the cities will be.

Directive:

Research what it will take to place a summary on the City's website about the SDS.

Ms. Jessie said it is a difficult subject to condense. She suggested that the City wait until after the City has a better idea of the County's stance on the SDS issue to place information on the website.

Mayor Dixon publicly commended Council Member Ruffin for providing the SDS resources to the members of Council.

Council Member Ruffin said he received the information from Staff.

Recess/Adjournment:

Motion to recess the Work Session until after the adjournment of the Business Session was offered by Council Member Wanda Wallace. Council Member Kenny Ruffin offered the second. The meeting was recessed at 6:59PM and reconvened at 7:23PM in the Council Chamber at City Hall. The final adjournment of the work session took place at 7:53PM with a motion by Council Member Wallace and Second by Council Member Ruffin.